

underlined and bracketed specification of Attachment A of the Preliminary Amendment is enclosed herewith. This enclosed specification is a copy of the specification as apparently originally filed in this divisional application, but includes a modification to the first page to recite the divisional status of the application. The Applicant apologizes for these matters and invites the Examiner to telephone Applicant's counsel if further resolution or clarification is necessary.

With regard to the objections to the declaration, the Applicant filed a replacement declaration on March 23, 2000.

The specification and drawings have been extensively amended to conform to the parent application serial no. 08/899,434 as amended on December 9, 1999 (and to related divisional applications). No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that this obviates the objections of numbered paragraphs 2-10 of the Office Action.

Similarly, the claims have been amended to obviate the objections and 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, rejections of numbered paragraphs 11-13.

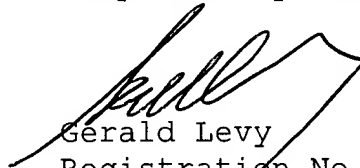
The Examiner rejected Claims 25, 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by the Kanemitsu reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,400,568). Similarly, the Examiner rejected Claims 25-29

under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the Bodolay reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,776,045) in view of the Kanemitsu reference. The claims have been amended to clarify that an extended flange is secured between the front and back walls and that one of the engaging portions is secured to the front wall only as a result of a sealing operation upstream of the forming and filling nozzle cylinder of a form, fill and seal machine. It is respectfully submitted that this is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the presently pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art.

For all of the reasons above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are in immediate condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw his rejections of the claims, to allow the claims, and to pass this application to early issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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